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- EDINBURGH-HOUSE
2 EATON-GATE, LONDON, S.W.1

Boston,
30th January, 1927.

My dear Speer,

I am very sorry that I failed to see you before leaving New York. Dr North and I were so deeply engaged in conversation that I did not realise how time was passing, and reached your office too late. I should have liked very much to have had the chance of talking with you about the Jerusalem meeting. The time at the luncheon was altogether inadequate, both to present what is in our minds, and also to get the full benefit of yours.

With most of what you said at the luncheon I found myself in the fullest agreement, and would wish to see the things you spoke about brought out at the Jerusalem meeting as emphatically as you asserted them. The only respect in which I did not entirely go with you - though this may quite well have been through failure to grasp your full meaning - was the suggestion that seemed to be implied in the way you put certain matters of a tendency to divorce things which in my view God means to be joined together.

I share deeply your concern in regard to the wide-spread hesitation even in missionary circles ^{as} to ~~question~~ whether we have in the Christian religion something absolutely unique and central. Uncertainty at this point cuts the nerve of missionary endeavour; and/

and the greatest service that the meeting at Jerusalem can render will be to do something to clear up these perplexities and uncertainties in the minds of those at home and among the younger generation in the indigenous churches, whose conviction is less clear and strong than one would wish. For myself I shall feel that the meeting at Jerusalem has missed its main purpose unless it issues in some fresh and convincing statement of the transcendent~~y~~ glory and richness of what we have in Christ. This will have to be of course not in terms of theological definition, which are the concern of the Conference on Faith and Order, and lie outside the province of the International Missionary Council, but in terms of the interpretation of spiritual experience.

I believe that the most hopeful way of achieving this end is to set ourselves in the first instance to recognise all that non-Christian systems have given to men to help them in the struggle of life. If Christ is what we believe Him to be all this will serve only as a foil to set off His glory. I know there are some people who seem afraid to acknowledge the best in non-Christian religions, lest it should somehow dim the splendour of Christ. Any such fear, however, would seem to be rooted in lack of faith in Him. A genuine faith will not shrink from the utmost generosity in the acknowledgement of all good outside the bounds of historic Christianity, knowing that the greater the heights to which the spirit of man may have reached apart from Him, the more clearly He will be seen to tower beyond them all.

In regard to the inner connexion between the letter to delegates and the statements which follow, I think you will find, on reading the documents, that the connexion is closer than may have appeared at the first presentation, and we have done something to strengthen it in the revision of the statement. The connexion seems to me to be this. What is said in the letter to/
to/

to delegated is not something conventional, but for me, and I think for the others who were at Rattvik, the expression of a re-orientation of our lives. But we can discover, I believe, the full meaning of the relation to God only in the measure that we go forth with courage to face the whole world that He has made and everything in~~it~~ it.

In regard to the other main point which you made I agree entirely with your reminder of the danger of building up a heavy super-structure without an adequate basis in the everyday work of the Church. Metaphors from the mechanical sphere, however, are apt to be dangerous when applied to spiritual things. I believe that the work of the missionaries and of the Native Church among the rural masses is the chief force making for their uplift and regeneration. But while I believe this, I see at the same time some people not definitely or explicitly committed to the missionary movement who are thinking about the uplift of these masses in ways that seem to show a fuller understanding of the needs of the people and of the things that will help them and improve them physically, morally and socially than is manifested in many missionary activities. Why should there be this divorce? Why should not the work of Christ have the best? What we should aim at, as it seems to me, is not to superimpose on the work of the Church something else that is not Christian, or less centrally Christian, but to fulfil the Christian task that has been committed to us in the very best way that it can be done, availing ourselves of all knowledge and insight and capacity for understanding that God has given. This is something entirely different from increasing overhead burden; it is a vitalising, enriching and strengthening of that day to day work which in the fullest agreement with you I believe to be the fundamental thing in our missionary endeavour.

I have little doubt that you agree with a great deal of what I have written. I send it only to try/

4.

try to clear up certain ^paparent differences of view which were due mainly I think to the hurriedness and incompleteness of presentation.

There are few things that I should like more than to have long and unhurried conversation with you about the issues involved in the Jerusalem meeting. I am sure I should gain a great deal from it. It is possible that I may be back again in America sometime for a longer visit. In that case I hope I may enjoy the privilege denied to me on this occasion.

With warm regards to Mrs Speer and yourself in which my wife joins.

I am

Yours very sincerely,

W. H. Auden

A. L. Warnshuis

"PRESENTATION OF THE MESSAGE"

Herewith is a copy of the list of questions which was suggested by a group which met a few weeks ago to discuss this subject.

These questions were submitted to a number of other people, who suggested modifications or alternatives forms. Out of these many suggestions I have selected one or two for each question, and these are given on a second page.

The questions proposed by Dr. Speer are intended, I understand, to supersede all of these questions. I am sending them out now only to enable the group the better to appreciate Dr. Speer's questions.

The group will meet at the Yale Club on May 10th at 4:30 P.M., and continue through the evening. At that meeting I suggest that our first question should be:-

1. What should be the questions to be proposed for the study of the American group or groups?
2. What group or groups should be invited in America to consider these questions? Who should be invited to join these groups? What leaders are suggested?
3. How should these groups be coordinated?
4. How shall we plan for the preparation of a statement to be presented to the Jerusalem Meeting on behalf of the American groups?

A. L. Warnshuis

May 4, 1927.

QUESTIONS AS GRAFTED BY AN EARLIER GROUP MEETING

- I. Give evidence or concrete data as to alleged discontent on the part of adherents of non-Christian religions with their systems of faith and morals.
- II. In face of non-Christian faiths or systems of thought prevalent today, how far has our experience supported the historic Christian claim that Christianity is the universal and final religion with a divine message to all mankind?
- III. What difference does Christ make in the life of the individual?
- IV. What dynamic can Christianity bring to bear upon our social problems, and what is the evidence as to whether it is doing so?
- V. In what sense is Christianity an historical religion, ~~or~~ How far does it depend for its distinctive character upon certain facts of history, such as the life, teaching, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ?
- VI. To what extent are the misunderstandings in the presentation of Christianity to non-Christians due to mistaken terminology?
- VII. What are the essential elements of the Christian message which produce and maintain vital Christian experience?
- VIII. What attitude is to be taken toward the un doubtedly good features or elements in other religions? What are those good features or elements, and what is their source? Which, if any, of these good features or elements does Christianity lack?
- IX. What evidence is there that the non-Christian religions can be made over so as to become adequate to the spiritual and moral needs of their adherents?

W. Douglas Mackenzie

HARTFORD SEMINARY FOUNDATION
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

June 13, 1927

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Dr. Robert E. Speer
156 Fifth Avenue
New York City

My dear Dr. Speer:

After attending three Committee Meetings on the proposed discussions at Jerusalem concerning the Christian Life and Message in relation to non-Christian Systems, I feel that to save further time someone ought to attempt to map out the material that has been suggested at these meetings.

This idea may have occurred to you, and you may have already worked it out. If so, forgive me for intruding with the accompanying somewhat extended draft of a program for these discussions. I have had to do it very rapidly, but I think that practically all the points that have been raised at the three Committee Meetings are embodied somewhere or other in the program I have suggested.

I think you will see that I have tried to include the interests of various elements who are to be represented at the Conference. No such program at such a Council can be anything but comprehensive, and must be organized on some basic principle. I hope it does not seem too dogmatic as I have set it forth, although I really do not think that dogma is a bad thing in the history of human life and thought.

Very sincerely yours,

W. Douglas Mackenzie

WDM/k

P.S. I am sending two copies to
Warrshuis as Secretary. W.D.M.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE AND MESSAGE IN RELATION TO NON-CHRISTIAN SYSTEMS

INTRODUCTORY: In preparing a programme for eight or nine periods of thorough discussion of this subject several principles for guidance ought to be adopted.

In the first place it is obvious that the fountainhead and the permanent center of the Christian life and faith is the historic Person of Jesus Christ. The full presentation of all the meanings and influences of Christ upon human character and destiny is the aim of the Church. It ought therefore to be the controlling aim of these discussions.

In the second place, it is equally obvious that the message concerning Christ has from the beginning carried with it a characteristic and unique "Christian" view of God, of the relation of God to the created universe, and of His purpose and method concerning human nature, human destiny. Hence the "Christian message" must be and is actually delivered, where delivered most wisely, in a different manner to the various peoples who are involved in the immensely varied non-Christian systems of belief concerning God, the world and man. The Christ of the Indian Road, of the Chinese^S Road, of the Bantu Road, is the same Christ, but His presentation and the resulting method of unfolding the Christian view of God and the world must be and actually is very different in these several cases.

In the third place, two subjects must be distinguished which are apt in some quarters to be confused. It is one thing to attempt to state the minimum conditions, as it were, on which it may be assumed that a man has begun to be a true and sincere Christian. A man who knows almost nothing of the "Christian system" as such may be so devoted to Christ, as far as he knows about His teaching

and authority, so simple and earnest in his trust and obedience, that no one would dare to say he is not "a Christian". But it is another thing to describe Christianity, to set forth all the vital implications of the Person of Christ and of full intelligent devotion to Him and to those conceptions of God and the world which are necessarily involved in His redeeming power and ruling authority.

It is in the light of these fundamental principles that any programme of discussion of "The Christian Life and Message in relation to non-Christian Systems" must be projected. The following is suggested as a first draft of such a programme.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE AND MESSAGE IN RELATION TO NON-CHRISTIAN SYSTEMS.

I. Jesus Christ as the Object and the Creative Center of Christian Faith and Life

This may be illustrated in various ways:

1. We may begin (a) with description and testimony to His meaning and power today throughout the world. Then (b) pass on to describe the power of His personality and Spirit as set forth in the New Testament. This would involve a discussion of Himself in His historic manifestation of Divine quality, as well as of the resultant experience of the Apostolic Church. Then (c) illustrate His supremacy for the "Christian System" from the great discussions of His Person, His Atoning Work, etc., in the history of the Church.
2. Or, we may begin with 1 (b), pass on to 1 (c), and conclude with 1 (a), the testimony of the modern world-wide experience to the universality and glory of His power today.

II. Wherever Christianity goes with its message concerning Christ, it conveys also a distinctive conception of God, the Creator, Father, Friend, Lord of All. A discussion of this fundamental fact would involve the following:

1. Some reference to the views of the Ultimate, or Absolute, or Divine as these appear today in the non-Christian systems, Hindu Philosophy, Buddhism, Mohammedanism, Chinese Religion, Primitive Religions, etc. Testimony might be had from appropriate sources to the inadequacy of these systems to satisfy (a) the hunger of the human heart for the divine, (b) the intellect of man for a worthy doctrine of the origin, direction and destiny of the universe.
2. Some reference to the great debates which from the Western World are spreading with the spread of education to all parts of the world concerning the Being and Nature of God. The characteristic Christian view as Theistic (and Trinitarian?) would have to be set forth as even today affording a more adequate and satisfying conception than the rival systems both in East and West of materialism, positivism and pantheism. (To some minds this will seem irrelevant. But not to those who know how the Christian world everywhere is restless for the full and authoritative setting forth of the Christian doctrine of God in the presence of the modern scientific view of the universe. Scholarly Christians in the Indian, Chinese and Japanese Churches are demanding help in the effort to grasp this supreme feature of the Christian message in the presence of atheism and agnosticism).

III. Wherever Christianity goes with its message concerning Christ it confronts a world that is in distress, through sorrow, suffering, sin and the fact of death. And also it finds everywhere the deep unsatisfied hunger for union and harmony with God. Everywhere Christianity proclaims that in the historic and the ever-living Christ, in the incarnation of His Son, in His sacrifice on the Cross, in His glorious victory over death, in His perpetual Spiritual Presence, God has made possible the full and true reconciliation of every man with Himself, has revealed the glorious destiny of man.

The open and confident discussion of this unparalleled message to all the world should be accompanied by abundant testimony to the reality and transcendent excellence of this range of human experience, from the history of great souls of the past and from the lips of those who represent the various races and churches of today. The forgiveness of sins and the cleansing power of the Spirit of Christ, the principle of faith, the habit of prayer, the "citizenship of heaven" are realities created by Christ.

IV. Wherever the Christian message concerning Christ goes today, it is carried in the name of various denominations. If the discussions are to be sincere, frank and open, it is inevitable that various views of certain vital subjects should seek to find expression. Hence one session may well be given to the two great subjects of

- a) The Bible in relation to the message concerning Christ, and
- b) The Sacraments as instruments in the life and experience of the Church.

V. Wherever the Christian message concerning Christ has gone it has produced immediate effects upon the moral character and conduct of human beings:

1. First of all Christ has revealed the infinite value of the individual for God. This was done in His explicit teaching, His personal methods with men and women, and in the meaning and effect of His sacrifice and resurrection.

This fact has exercised an absolutely immeasurable influence wherever it has been proclaimed and received. It is the deepest foundation of the entire movement called "democracy". Testimony to this can be had not only from past history, but from the experience of mission fields today. Compare effects in Uganda and Japan.

2. Second, Christ has revealed the value of God for man.

This fact is bound up with (a) the revelation of man's destiny as the gift of His grace, (b) the full revelation of the will of God for man's moral guidance as being a holy love. This has entered into the whole Christian conception of man's attitude towards God as that of penitence and faith. It has also created the Christian conception of worship both individual and social.

3. Third, Christ has revealed the value of man to, and for, man.

(a) This has been described in the well-known phrase, "the enthusiasm of humanity". It has also been described as "seeing Christ in everyman". That which from the beginning has been manifested - in spite of

abundant failure and even hideous distortion on the part of ecclesiastical authorities and popular forms of prejudice and cruelty, even in the name of truth and order - and which is illustrated in every mission field today is this spirit of philanthropy as expressing the mind of Christ, the Will of God. It has given rise to such movements as the gradual abolition of chattel slavery, the determination to find ways of replacing industrial slavery with true cooperation, the emancipation and enfranchisement of womankind, the loving care and universal education of children, the curbing of cruelty (even to the animal world), the universal will to abolish war and to create the institutions and instruments of international peace, cooperation and goodwill. These are all direct effects of the message concerning Christ and His Spirit.

- (b) It will be necessary to see that the Divine method of pursuing these results, which can only be based on the transformation of individual and social ideals and character, is that of gradual assimilation of the human mind and heart to the holy and loving will of God as manifested and made effective in Jesus Christ. No shallow view of human nature in its weakness, its selfish impulses, its sin, can be allowed to minimize the task of God, as Savior, Guide and Lord of ~~Human Nature~~ and its history.

And yet confession must be made of the part which we all have in hindering that work of God.

(c) Creative evolution has been ever slow, and in evolving a perfected humanity out of what we know ourselves to be who can demand or expect the sudden emergence of the likeness of Christ in the human mass? The Message concerning Christ today must be based not only on the power of the Gospel, the illimitable promises of the Bible, but on the facts of two thousand years of history, as these reveal the nature of that difficult material with which the Divine Grace is concerned in the redemption of mankind.

VI. The Message concerning Christ has from the beginning set Him forth as bringing "life and immortality to light".

1. Testimony can be had abundantly to the extraordinary effect produced everywhere by the revelation of the eternal life. What changes are thus wrought in the spiritual outlook of those who have been Hindus, Buddhists, Mohammedans, fetich worshippers, can be abundantly illustrated.
2. How the modern development of society has seemed to lessen the sense of urgency at this point may be discussed. Not materialism only and money greed, but the almost universal passion for aesthetic satisfaction as well as for mere amusement seem to make this life so full of real value as to shut off the light of the future as Christ has revealed it, and to quench the yearning for that fellowship with God which always contains the assurance of the eternal life. Even the "social gospel" has seemed in some quarters to be so concerned with the Kingdom of God on earth as to depreciate the very idea of the Kingdom of Heaven.

3. ~~Is~~ it possible that the Orient may react upon the Occident in this matter, rebuking Western worldliness with a fresh revelation of eternal values for the human soul? Or is it also possible that the spread of Western civilization through political reorganization, natural science, industrialism and transportation, ^{and} ~~of~~ exciting amusements may lower the ancient interest of the Orient in purely spiritual values?

VII. If the message concerning Christ, as thus viewed in its divine majesty, its universal and profound effects upon human thought and life, is to be delivered with full effect, the following topics may well be discussed.

1. The study of the nature of religion during the last hundred years of scholarly research in all parts of the world has revealed the fact that human nature is essentially religious, This means that it possesses instincts, desires, impulses, ideals, which can only be satisfied by finding the right "Attitude towards the Controller of Destiny". How, then have the various religions sought to satisfy this hunger?
2. The evidence seems to be abundant, it ought to be gathered from the direct testimony of those who have abandoned these religions for Christianity, as well as from other sources, that these religions have all failed to satisfy human nature.
 - a) They must all bear witness to some phase or phases of true religion. Can these, in the respective cases, be identified and described?
 - b) They all bear witness to the fact that apart from Christ man has not found the personal Fatherhood of God and pos-

session of His fellowship, the forgiveness of sin, the supreme ethical ideals for the individual and society, the due nourishment of "the soul", the emancipation from death in the assurance of "a blessed immortality".

VIII. The climax of all these discussions may well be reached in the attempt to set forth the message concerning Christ in such a manner as to convince the International Council at Jerusalem that Christ, His Person, His character, His saving Power, His revelation of God, has never yet been completely apprehended by His Church nor worthily given to the world.

- a) The hindrances and failures should be described and confessed with unanimous and most humble contrition of heart.
- b) Yet (sursum corda!) the unsearchable riches of Christ, the completeness and finality of the grace of God in Him must be reaffirmed. "Crown Him with many crowns".

Arthur H. Smith

RECEIVED

Claremont, California, October 10th 1927.

OCT 17 1927

Dr. Robert E. Speer, New York;

Dear Dr. Speer;

Mr. Speer

I received your circular letter of inquiry about the "message" for the Jerusalem Conference more than two months ago, but I waited for the return of Dr. Doremus Scudder, who has been on a tour around the world for more than two years, in order to confer with him. He has visited many mission fields in Turkey, India, China, and Japan, and is familiar with conditions in the Hawaiian Islands and the Pacific.

1. What are the outlines of this message? They are the same that always have been and always must be: The existence and the unity of God, Salvation through Jesus Christ his son our Savior, who came to declare and to represent him on earth; the indwelling and outworking power of the Holy Spirit whom he sends to be with and to dwell in all those who seek for his presence and obey his teaching as made known in the scriptures and through an enlightened conscience. The "dynamic of personal experience" is a condition of effectual evangelistic work, which is not intellectual but spiritual. It is essential that the historicity of these facts in the life of Christ upon earth be stressed, and that illustrations be given of the power of the Christ life upon people of every land and in every age. (The chancellor of the Netherlands legation in Peking, an earnest Christian who made it a point to go every Sunday ten miles to attend the services in Gen. Feng's camp, told me that in the spring of 1926 he heard a sermon by a Chinese preacher to the soldiers based upon John XV, in which the audience was told that the "Vine" signified the Chinese Nation, and the "branches" the Chinese people, and that the "real meaning" was that the Chinese must stick to their country and all pull together!) It has recently been pointed out that "a conflict has arisen between the age long consciousness on the part of the Chinese of their cultural and religious past, and the juvenile consciousness of the Christian Church which tends to be submerged in the revived consciousness of China's past." This creates a really serious situation.

2. Is the Christian message different for different peoples and religions, and for different times and situations, and if so how far different and in what respect? Of course it is different, and must be different. Jew and Gentile, Greek and Roman, African, Turk, Indian, Chinese must be approached from different angles, as was done by the apostles, and in every generation since. This difference is not susceptible of logical analysis, but must be apprehended by the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord.

3. What do you regard as the real hindrance in the way of response to such a message, and its acceptance? It is the flagrant and outstanding contradiction between Christianity as presented and as lived. All the "Gentile" world is now thoroughly disillusioned, and knows historically as well as experimentally that there are no "Christian" lands, and that there never have been any.

It is my considered conviction that no "message" to the Chinese people, or to Turks, Indians, Africans, or Japanese which does not explicitly recognize the failure of ~~the~~ Christian nations to put Christianity into practice will even get a hearing. In Turkey a missionary is debarred from citing the history of Christianity by reason of the vivid remembrance of the detested "Crusades", as well as by the modern history of Europe, the Near East, and Egypt.

In India we are told that the adjective "Christian" is likewise taboo, because of British treatment of India and its peoples. (Amritsar, &c, &c.)

(Two generations ago Dr. Richard S. Storrs published a large volume of lectures showing how the Divine Origin of Christianity is proved by its historical effects. This, his principal work, is not even mentioned in the eleventh edition the Encyclopedia Britannica! It would be easy to compile a work of the same size, thoroughly documented, with illustrative proofs from every "Christian" nation of the Satanic origin of Occidental civilization.)

In Burma, Siam, the

Straits Settlement, the Philippine Islands, China, Korea, and Japan the same is true, but in China there is at present greatly augmented antagonism on this account. There are naturally and inevitably serious embarrassments in the admission of national sins, yet there is no escaping the fact that the whole world is thoroughly aware of them whether we recognize the fact or not.

The history of the world for nineteen centuries down to the present day illustrates them on every continent and on ^{almost} every island.

Turning to a consideration of the ^{messengers} themselves we are equally confronted with our individual faults of omission and of commission.

In the face of John XVII and many other passages how can we explain or defend our divided Christianity? Our denominational distinctions are ordinarily considered not as a debit but as an asset. There is no consciousness of wrong in the case of most Christians, and efforts to enable conservative minded and those of a more liberal cast to work together are generally ineffective and futile. At the great Edinburgh Council Dr. Ch'eng Ching-yi, one of the leading Christians of China made as one of his seven points: "Denominational distinctions do not interest us Chinese". When the Chinese really take charge there is good reason that many of them will be automatically swept away. Among us missionaries in China what is now termed the "superiority complex" has been and remains practically universal. If we are not "superior" what are we there for? We have at times had in our ranks men, and also some women, who ought never to have been sent abroad. (There have occasionally been some disastrous failures of moral character.) This is perfectly well known to all Chinese with intimate knowledge of mission work, but it is seldom or never openly acknowledged.

We have often and sometimes obstinately employed unsuitable and unregenerate men, without inquiring whether they had a call of the Lord, or spiritual qualifications. Such workers after dismissal by one mission have sometimes been taken on by other missions perhaps against protest, and not infrequently with disastrous consequences. We have too often forgotten or disregarded the warning of Zech. 4.6. that work is furthered not by might or power but by the working of the Spirit of God. We have unconsciously postponed or prevented the day of self-support in Chinese churches by unwise use of foreign funds.

We have constantly laid out our plans on a worldly basis, trusting to what one of our Chinese critics (Mr. Ku Hung-ming) calls our "electric light civilization". The "Inter-Church" enterprise following the Great War was a flagrant example of what has been a general trend. How can we suppose that the extensive undertaking upon which we have entered in China can ever be "taken over" by the Chinese churches and supported by their own scanty funds? Christianity has come to China this time to stay. Eventually as in other lands it will have become "indigenous", but in the long interim we must under the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord enter upon a new era.

Arthur H. Smith

CABLEGRAMS: "INMISSION, NEW YORK"
"INMISCO, LONDON"
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NORSK MISSIONSRAAD
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MISSIONARY SOCIETIES OF SOUTH AFRICA
SUOMEN LÄHETYSNEUVOSTO
SVENSKA MISSIONSRADET
ASSOCIATION OF MISSIONARY SOCIETIES IN SWITZERLAND

419 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY

December 12, 1927.

Dr. Robert E. Speer,
156 Fifth Avenue,
New York City.

Dear Dr. Speer:

The vote on the time of the meeting of the group on the Message is already overwhelming in favor of December 21st. I shall therefore send out a second circular tomorrow fixing the meeting definitely for that date. This releases the reservation you had tentatively made for the 23rd.

I have sent invitations to the following people:— Dr. Mott, Dr. Rufus Jones, Dr. Wm. Adams Brown, Dr. Stevenson, Dr. Coffin, Dean Fosbroke, Dr. Hoss, Mr. John Bailie, Rev. Van Dusen, Dr. Hodous, Dr. Watson, Rev. Cavert, Dr. Knubel, Dr. Franklin, Bishop McConnell, Dr. Leavitt, Dr. Maackenzie, Dr. Soper, yourself and myself.

Within the next few days I shall check the list carefully and try to make sure that we are not omitting others who ought to be there if we can obtain their attendance. Will you look through this list and send me a note suggesting the names of any that you think ought to be added.

I enclose a copy of a memorandum which Paton has prepared and which I shall enclose in my next circular to all the members of the Group.

Yours faithfully,

A. L. Warnshuis

ALW/MHS

MEMORANDUM ON THE JERUSALEM DISCUSSION OF THE
CHRISTIAN MESSAGE IN RELATION TO NON-CHRISTIAN SYSTEMS
OF THOUGHT AND LIFE

I have been asked to put down on paper the general plan which has opened up in regard to the discussion of this immensely important subject at the Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council.

(1) The importance of the subject is two fold, - in the first place, the presentation of Christianity to the mind of the East, both that part of it which thinks in terms of the modern world and the more conservative part which lives in the ancient world, is a task of great difficulty. The difference between Christianity and Hinduism, to take one instance, extends to the most fundamental issues, particularly to the whole conception of God, to the meaning found in personality and to the sense in which any one personality manifested on the human plane can be held to be an adequate and satisfying revelation of the divine. The systems of life and thought which ~~some~~ go by the names of Hinduism or Buddhism, while they may have lost their hold on many Western educated men, are still held by many, including sincere and thoughtful minds to be true in a sense in which Christianity is held to be untrue. When we ask how far adequate provision is made to enable indigenous pastors and teachers or missionaries to cope adequately with ~~the~~ task of presenting the Christian message to the Eastern mind, one cannot but feel that that provision is inadequate.

In the second place, it is agreed on all hands that the continuance of the mission enterprise depends upon Christian conviction of the profoundest sort and that a variety of reasons, including a vague knowledge of the results of the comparative study of religion, have contributed to the weakening of that conviction. Men and women will only give either their money or themselves to the missionary enterprise on the basis of a conviction that the Christian revelation is of a unique and universal worth. In so far as this conviction

is diminished or weakened missions must suffer and advance is only possible as the fundamental spiritual conviction grows deep and strong.

(2) How far is the Christian church using its own resources in this task?

I can speak with some knowledge of Great Britain, and I say without fear of contradiction that there are many men who take high rank among Christian thinkers and who believe in foreign missions who have ^{never} ~~only~~ lent their minds to the great issues which that missionary work involves. In short, we need for the adequate performance of the great task abroad and for the deepening, and indeed the rehabilitation of the missionary idea at home, the best Christian thinking available in our theological seminaries and among men who are giving themselves to the study of Christian religion.

(3) In these papers dealing with non-Christian faiths which have been prepared for the Jerusalem Meeting we have, I think, some really valuable material. The standard is high, the point of view is fresh. On the whole, the emphasis is placed on the experimental rather than on academic lines of comparison and in reading the papers I feel that two thoughts go home. The first is the crucial nature of the issues raised and the necessity of facing them with an apologetic which is not merely conventional and is much more profound than a good deal of modern Christian presentation can claim to be. The other is that out of these papers seems to rise up in the mind a rich, profound Christianity, doing, it seems to me, full justice to the truths cherished by conservative Christians and facing also without fear the needs of the modern world. The material we already have, and which will be revised and improved at and after Jerusalem, ought to be of great help to the Christian forces in the performance of their tasks.

(4) I hope that it may be possible to enlist in the carrying out of this campaign some of the best Christian minds of America, Great Britain and the Continent, as well as in the mission field. We have in England a group formed comprising a few prominent theologians, philosophers, students of

comparative religions and men with practical knowledge of the mission field. This group will meet for two days early in January and will give its best energies ^{to the} study and discussion of the papers prepared for Jerusalem and will try to offer its comments and views upon them for the benefit of the Jerusalem Meeting. I hope, however, that the group may be held together, or perhaps maintained as a series of smaller groups in some of our chief centers, and that we may continue to hold the attention and obtain the help of these men in the task of Christian evangelization and apologetic in the mission field. This can be done in various ways. It should work out through the theological seminaries; it should find expressions in books of different grades; it might find expression in visits to the field, exchange lectureships, etc., whereby definite help could be brought to those in India, China, etc., who are engaged in dealing with the great issues.

I venture to hope that in North America the same thing may be done.

(5) To sum up, the outline of work that I suggest is

(a) The discussion of the Jerusalem material by the strongest group that can be got together and the formation of views which can be presented for the help of those who meet together at the Jerusalem gathering.

(b) The continuance, whether in one or in several groups, of a concerted effort in North America to enlist the resources of thought and experience and scholarship which the Christian movement possesses on behalf of the task of Christian evangelism and apologetic throughout the world along the lines of the writing of books, the sharing of the results of discussion, the helping of theological students, missionaries on furlough, Orientals who visit the country, and possibly the sending to the mission field occasionally ~~fax~~ of some of our brightest scholars not merely to lecture to large audiences but to deal quietly and intensively with those, whether Christians or non-Christians, who are engaged in the honest search for light and want the help that can be given them by men of experience and learning.

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RECEIVED

JAN 7 - 1928

Mr. Speer

419 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY

January 5, 1928.

Dear Dr. Speer:

Herewith I enclose copies of the first two papers that are being prepared in advance for the discussion in the group that is to meet on January 20 - 21, in preparation for the Jerusalem Council Meeting.

The arrangements are now completed with the Hotel Gramatan so that we can meet there. A special rate has been given to the members of this group of \$6.00 per day for each person, for single or double rooms with bath.

Please let me know by return mail whether you wish to room with anybody, or otherwise, I shall reserve a single room for you.

We shall plan to meet at dinner at 6.30 promptly and begin our discussion immediately after dinner at about 7.30 o'clock. I think the meeting will close not later than six o'clock on Saturday evening, January 21st.

For your convenience, I enclose railway time tables.

Yours sincerely,

ALW/MBS

A. L. Warnshuis